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UNITED WE STAND

The entire academic world is agog over the success of the Associated Colleges Plan—ACP, for short. I mean, you go to any campus in the country these days and you will see students and faculty dancing on the green, blowing penny whistles, grabbing each other by the elbows and yelling, "About that ACP, Charley—like wow!"

And who can blame them? The ACP is a plan not only simply brilliant, but also brilliantly simple. All it is, is a loose regional federation of small colleges. Let's say, for example, that in a given region we have a group of small colleges, each with its own academic specialty. Small College No. 1, let's say, has a fine language department; Small College No. 2, let's say, has a fine science department; No. 3 has a fine music department; etc., etc.

Well sir, under the ACP these various colleges federate. A student in any one of the colleges can take courses in the specialty of any of the other colleges and—here's the beauty part!—he will receive credit for the course at his home college. Thus he enjoys all the advantages of a big university without losing the comfy coziness of a small college!

Well sir, you can see what a good idea the ACP is. I respectfully submit, however, that just because a thing is good is no reason not to try to make it better. Like, for instance, Marlboro Cigarettes. Marlboros were good from the very beginning, and people found out quickly and sales zoomed. But did the makers of Marlboro say, "Okay, we've got it made. Let's relax"? Well sir, if that's what you think, you don't know the makers! They did *not* relax. They took their good Marlboro and kept improving them. They improved the filter, improved the blend, improved the pack. They researched and developed tirelessly, until today Marlboro is just about the most admirable cigarette you can put a match to. There are, in fact, some people who find Marlboros so admirable they can't bear to put a match to them. They just sit with a single Marlboro in hand and admire it for ten, twelve years on end. The makers of Marlboro are of course deeply touched by this—except for E. Rennie Sigafoos, the sales manager.

But I digress. The ACP, I say, is good but it can be better. Why should the plan be confined to small colleges? Why should it be confined to a limited region? Why not include all colleges and universities, big and small, wherever they are?

Let's start such a federation. Let's call it the "Bigger Associated Colleges To Encourage Richer Intellectual Activity"—BACTERIA, for short!

What a bright new world BACTERIA opens up. Take, for example, a typical college student—Hunrath Sigafoos (son, incidentally, of the Marlboro sales manager). Hunrath, a bright lad, is currently majoring in barley at the University of Kentucky. Under the BACTERIA plan, Hunrath could stay at Kentucky, where he has made many friends, but at the same time broaden his vistas by taking a course in constitutional law at Harvard, a course in physics at Caltech, a course in frostbite at Minnesota and a course in pot at Hawaii!

I admit there are still a few bugs in BACTERIA. How, for instance, could Hunrath attend a 9 o'clock class at Harvard, a 10 o'clock class at Hawaii, an 11 o'clock class at Minnesota, and still keep his lunch date at Kentucky? It would be idle to deny that this is a tricky problem, but I have no doubt American ingenuity will carry the day. Always remember how they laughed at Edison and Fulton—and particularly at Walter Clavicle who invented the collarbone.

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Three cheers for American ingenuity, which gave us the ACP, the collarbone and MGM . . . that's the Mighty Good Makin's you get in Marlboro, the filter cigarette with the unfiltered taste. Settle back and enjoy one. You get a lot to like.

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